

COMMITTEE FOR AN OPEN ARCHIVES
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The Committee for an Open Archives was founded in November, 1991 by researchers John Judge and William E. Kelly to organize and coordinate lobbying efforts to obtain full public access to all records, files, evidence and archival materials relating to the assassinations of John F. and Robert Kennedy, Martin Luther King and other covert operations.

Documents and evidence from the Warren Commission investigation have been locked up for nearly thirty years under an Executive Order by President Johnson that runs out in 2038. While many pre-censored items have been released under Freedom of Information Act requests, key documents and physical evidence remain classified.

Some 848 boxes of House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA) files, transcripts and documents are locked away under House Rule #36 until 2029.

In addition to these collections, the U.S. intelligence agencies, specifically FBI, Division Five, CIA, Defense Intelligence Agency, Army and Navy Intelligence, Defense Industrial Securities Command and others have important files on these assassinations and the key characters involved. These are protected under the cloak of "national security".

The Committee for an Open Archives has been working to influence Congress to introduce and pass legislation that will accelerate the release of all documents and evidence relating to the assassinations of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King. We have already identified and are working closely with Congress members sympathetic to our goals, including Representative William J. Hughes (D-NJ) of the House Judiciary Committee, and Senator Henry Gonzales (D-TX), whose resolution (HR 325) calls for full public release of the House Select Committee files in thirty days.

In addition, we are surveying all Representatives on their position on the release of these files. We are lobbying them to co-sponsor and support legislation in this session to amend House Rule #36. Once introduced, this bill must pass the House Administration Committee. We are focusing on the membership of this body, since a similar bill (HR 160, 98th Congress) died in committee. A simple majority of the House can pass the bill once out of committee.

A bill has also been introduced by Rep. James Traficant (D-OH) that calls for release of files from all Federal investigations (HR 4090). We are expecting release in a few weeks of a bill from Rep. Stokes (D-OH), which will get the support of Democratic House leaders Mitchell and Foley. Since Stokes has been the major roadblock preventing access until recently, we fear that his bill will add restrictions of time, scholarship, credentials, and pre-censorship of documents.

The Committee for an Open Archives works to inform the public about what information is being withheld and to create a broad base of public support for the release of documents as soon

as possible. We oppose further official investigations, or appointment of a special prosecutor who may monopolize documents and place restrictions on access to the files. We also oppose limited access to documents based on scholarship, security clearances or pre-censored or timed release.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Due to our efforts, Congressman Hughes contacted Rep. Louis Stokes (D-OH), the former Chairperson of the HSCA, and helped to persuade him that the records should be made public.

A national petition drive has been initiated to persuade Congress to amend House Rule #36, which will effect the release of HSCA files.

We have initiated lobbying and publicity in Washington, DC, including a local address for correspondence and have a presence on Capitol Hill.

We are coordinating a diverse group of researchers and interested citizens who support of our common goal of open, shared information.

We are forming a representative advisory board that includes many of the key researchers and scholars in these investigations. To date, Peter Dale Scott, Fletcher Prouty, Jerry Rose and others have agreed to work with us.

FUTURE OBJECTIVES

PROLOGUE will be our regular newsletter giving updated information and reporting on individual Congress members' response to our efforts.

Volunteers are being coordinated to distribute literature and gather signatures at showings of the film JFK and other related events.

Using a combination of editorial letters, talk appearances, public forums and contacts in the media, we are responding to criticisms of the film JFK and taking advantage of renewed interest in the assassination to bring out the truth.

We plan to open a permanent office near the Archives to collect, analyze, index and disseminate the files once they are available. This will include a computer network, an on-line data base and easy access to document copies by fax or mail.

We are establishing a board of advisors, including prominent individuals and researchers, and seeking institutional benefactors to supplement contributions from individuals, foundations and other sources.

PROJECTS

A 900 number could be established to provide regular updates on Congressional legislation, and new information pertaining to the case. This could be advertised through the media, and would provide a source of funding and identify our base of support.

A major national demonstration, including Congressional and popular supporters, can focus the growing wave of public support for opening the files.

Purchasing time on cable television and radio stations will allow ongoing interaction with the public, provide information not available elsewhere, and serve as a source of organizing and support.

